

Reeser's Landfill

EPA Region 3

Pennsylvania

Lehigh County

5 miles west of Allentown

EPA ID# PAD980829261

15th Congressional District

Last Update:

August 2002

Other Names: None

Current Site Status

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency deleted the Reeser's Landfill site from the National Priorities List of the nation's most hazardous waste sites on May 31, 1990.

Site Description

The Reeser's Landfill was an unpermitted dump site for municipal and commercial wastes which operated in a former mine pit before 1970 and apparently ceased operating in 1980. In 1983, the EPA found elevated levels of lead and cadmium in one groundwater well near the site, and low levels of mercury contamination on the landfill itself. Low levels of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons and phenol were identified in a sediment sample collected from an unnamed tributary stream east of the landfill. Homes in the immediate vicinity of the site rely on private wells for drinking water. A public well which serves an estimated 3,400 people is located approximately 2,000 feet from the site. Most of the landfill rainwater runoff drains to Iron Run, a tributary

to the Lehigh River. The closest residence and well is located 800 feet from the site. The population within a mile of the site is 265; the population located within three miles is 2,400. There are 268 wells within three miles of the site.

Site Responsibility


This site was addressed through federal and state actions.

NPL Listing History

Our country's most serious, uncontrolled, or abandoned hazardous waste sites can be cleaned using federal money. To be eligible for federal cleanup money, a site must be put on the National Priorities List. This site was formally added to the list on July 22, 1987 and deleted from the list on May 31, 1990.

Threats and Contaminants

Zinc and lead, allegedly from former waste disposal practices, were found in monitoring wells. Local wells were contaminated with low levels of zinc, mercury, cadmium, and lead. Soils and sediments also contained evidence of heavy metals. Concentrations of these chemicals were found to be within established safety standards. The EPA has determined the site does not pose any health threats.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html> 

Cleanup Progress

A thorough investigation was performed by EPA in 1987-1988, including the re-sampling of the areas found to be contaminated during a preliminary assessment, the installation of several monitoring wells, sampling of on-site and off-site surface water and soils, and excavation of the actual landfill wastes for visual and chemical analysis. This extensive sampling effort could not duplicate the results determined during the preliminary assessment. Risk calculations indicated that the site posed no significant endangerment to public health and welfare or the environment. A "No Action" Record of Decision was issued on March 30, 1989. The site was deleted from the NPL on May 31, 1990.

Contacts

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Detailed public files (Administrative Record) on EPA's actions and decisions for this site can be examined at the following location:

U.S. EPA Region III

6th Floor Docket Room

1650 Arch Street.

Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-814-3157

Please call for an appointment.